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Lean is Green



As the world turns around us in these days of crisis and concern for deficits, bankruptcy, bailouts, and the like, the larger concern of what is happening to our planet seems to be pushed to the background.

Yet, the problems of our economy and the problems of our planet are inexorably linked.

As we have explored and exploited every corner of the earth we have acted as if its abundance was inexhaustible. We have paid little concern to the long-term consequences of our actions and behavior, and only now are we beginning to see and feel that we have reached what Malcolm Gladwell describes as 'the tipping point' - the point of no return.

The days of assuming that our resources are inexhaustible are coming to an end.

It may well be me, but I seem to be hearing more and more the word "**Green**" bandied about in the media.

— *Walter E. Lowell*

Perhaps it was the oil crisis this past summer that finally pushed us to the point of no return, but it does seem there is no going back to the days of gas guzzling cars and wasteful practices of any kind.

James Lovelock proposed the Gaia Hypothesis which stated that Planet Earth was a complex interacting system acting like a single organism. He proposed that it contained cybernetic loops, feedback mechanisms that work to promote homeostasis -- that is, systems that go out of control are brought back into control, much like the thermostat control the temperature in your house.

Unlike your house, these corrections on Earth might take thousands, maybe millions, of years, all with little concern to humankind. The Gaia Hypothesis leads me to think of Planet Earth as a living, breathing organism that lets humans and all life go along for the ride as long as we behave ourselves.

November 2008

Volume 3, Issue 11

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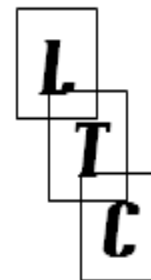
Special points of interest:

- Next Clinicals
 - December 19
 - January 16
 - February 20
- 12/16 Miller workshop almost here !



Cont'd on p.7 —

Long-Term Care Eligibility Processes — VSM



The Team:

VSM Sponsor: Barbara VanBurgel

VSM Manager: Cheryl Ring

Other Team Members: Carmen Carney, Ron Edmondson, Sharon Foerster, Michael Frey, Bethany Hamm, Carole Kus, Lorraine LaChappelle, Brenda McCormick, Louise Olsen, Suzanne Pinette, Jo-Linn Tibbetts, Gwen Watkins

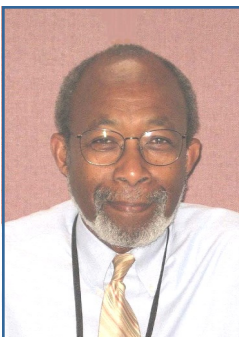


This value-stream mapping of the DHHS financial and medical processes to determine whether a person is eligible to receive MaineCare funding for long-term care services — conducted November 6, 7, and 14 by CI-PS Merle Davis and Lita Klavins — was initiated and completed under the auspices of a “system transformation” grant from the federal Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services. The ultimate objective of the grant is to improve people’s access to DHHS’ social services, including minimizing the number of “hoops” people have to go through, the amount of information DHHS must collect from people, and the length of time people have to wait before they find out if they can get services. The VSM Team’s implementation plan, supported by Sponsor Barbara VanBurgel, will streamline long-term care assessments, decrease rework, improve timeliness for the consumer, optimize and streamline technology, and reevaluate contracts with providers in order to achieve cost, staff, and time gains.

— Cheryl Ring, Project Director & VSM Manager

“It’s easier to act your way to a new way of thinking than to think your way to a new way of acting.”

John Shook. *Managing to Learn: How Lean Leaders Create Productive Problem-Solvers — Part 1.* LEI Webinar. October 9, 2008



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MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER 16, 2008!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR DECEMBER 16, 2008

— for —

The first in a series of *We Don't Make Widgets: Overcoming the Myths That Keep Government From Radically Improving Workshops*
Ken Miller, lead instructor.

The Maine State Training Office and the *Operational Excellence* Committee (includes CI-Ps from DOT, DHHS, MDOL, and BHR) are proud to announce that **Ken Miller** will lead two sessions of the **Leading Change in State Government Workshop: "Overcoming the Myths That Keep Government From Radically Improving"** on **December 16, 2008**.

This innovative workshop is designed to help attendees address having limited financial resources, having to work harder for the same or lesser results, shifting customer expectations, and preparing for new technology and an aging workforce. Ken will provide attendees with the necessary foundation to help them see most clearly why they should focus on their **process**. It will also enable them to begin the process of learning why and how **Lean and Lean Tools** will enable them to make improvements in their agency or work area in order to decrease time-to-customer, improve quality, reduce costs, and make work better for themselves and their employees.

This is the first in a series of six to nine planned *Leading Change in State Government* workshops. The next workshop is tentatively scheduled for March 2009. The March workshop will be a repeat of the December 16th event. The third "Overcoming the Myths That Keep Government From Radically Improving" workshop is planned to be specifically a **Continuous Improvement Practitioner (CI-P) training session**. This CI-P Workshop is tentatively planned for the May/June 2009 time frame. All practicing CI-Ps will be invited to attend (tho' there may be a fee involved).

FYI....

A "practicing" CI-P is defined as a CI-P who attends ~80% of their Clinical Supervisions and Observes, Co-leads and/or Leads the requisite number of Lean interventions. Of the 53 CI-Ps trained, there are currently 18 practicing CI-Ps. If you are not currently a 'practicing CI-P' and you begin attending Clinical Supervisions sessions regularly starting with the **next** Clinical, December 19, 2008, as well as Observe, Co-lead or Lead Lean interventions, you would qualify as a practicing CI-P by the May/June time frame, in time for the Miller CI-P workshop.

Notes: Clinical Supervision - November 21, 2008

Welcome

Tim Griffin facilitated this clinical, with Walter Lowell as scribe.

For check-in, Tim asked the CI-Ps to answer the question: "What do we have to be thankful for"? Responses included:

- The Room.
- Miller Coming.
- Being here at Clinical.
- We have so much to offer.

Announcement: Marcel Gagne is returning to active participation as a CI-P in BTC.

Lean Learning: Lean Tools

Lean Learnings used the Tools section from the *CI-P Reference Guide*.

Arthur asked the CI-Ps to break out into groups and use the tool matrix he developed in order to enable them to be able to answer "How can I best serve my client?".

Group Report-Outs:

Team 1 reported results and talked about how they processed the form and the tools they selected to describe.

Team 2 talked about the lack of designated roles within the group to process the form. They didn't get to complete the entire matrix.

EXPLORING REASONS FOR LEARNING, USING, AND BENEFITING FROM TOOL STUDY				
WHO	WHAT	WHY	WHEN	HOW
Focus of Use (For example)	The Reasons for Learning	The Benefit(s)	The Best Time(s) to Learn	Examples of Method(s) of Learning that Enable Retention
Self (Me)				
Individual (an other)				
Team (an intact group working as one for a stated purpose)				
Work Unit or Group (LMIS, ELT, etc.)				
Sub-System (MDOL, DHHS, MDOT, etc.)				
System (Maine State Gov't, USM, Maine Court System, etc.)				

Comments: The discussion was helpful. Reasons for learning—use in a crisis mode; learn facilitation methods; gain confidence and competence; learn and do, do and learn. However, it was noted that we did not follow a good group process & define roles nor did we define how we would process the materials.

Practice: CI-P Lessons & Questions “from the Road”

A number of interesting topics were raised and discussed, including:

- how to use and “standardize” newer VSM, Kaizen, and other RIE approaches,
- when to use Swim Lanes,
- benefits of having an Observer, e.g. to check-point process,
- how to use the A3 format and methodology,
- getting staff to recognize the importance of taking the time to do the work,
- how to get the sponsor & manager to complete the implementation plan,
- how to deal with resistance,
- Lean 101 (awareness & simulation),
- paradigm shift, and
- how to develop learners.

Open Forum

- Question of offering “Lean 101” courses through BHR State Training was discussed, although the attendant cost to participants was recognized.
- Lita reported that a November 19th Practicum in Lean Management was held for ten staff, offered jointly with DHHS SETU. This includes participation in one or more study missions and the development and follow-through on a problem/issue intervention identified by each student. CI-P’s will be asked to work with participants on the chartering and an intervention. The results will be reported in a presentation to the Commissioner.
- Arthur said the upcoming Miller events are being conducted jointly by State BHR Training and the Committee for Operational Excellence.
- Learning modules we could consider developing include measurement of intervention results, Lean in Everyday Work as an intelligent improvement process, and terminology basics.

Cont’d on next page —



The Ins & Outs of CI-Ps



★ Marcel Gagne has returned to the BTC fold ! He’d been assigned to a special project but is now back at MaineCare. He’s eager to catch up and, with the active support of his supervisor, resume his Practitioner practice and championing of continuous improvement.

Notes: Clinical Supervision - November 21, 2008 (cont'd from p.5)

- Eric distributed an article “Lessons in Leadership” that emphasized the “transformative experience” as a crucible creating “an altered sense of identity.” Trials and tests force individuals to “answer questions about who they are and what is really important to them.”
- How can people who miss one or more Clinicals and other developmental activities catch up on essential learnings? We agreed to do a rapid improvement process at our January clinical to develop a solution.
- Strategies for delivering on the implementation plans from interventions: At the outset, be upfront that participants must buy into the idea of the intervention being part of a “process;” ensure that sponsors, managers, and participants know they will be supported in achieving their plan; only do interventions where there is “pull” for the event.

Lean Lab: A3

The focus of this Lean Lab, held over from the October Clinical, was the problem/issue of *Attendance at Clinical*, using the A3 methodology & process. Two break-out groups used the A3 approach to develop improvements (counter-measures) to address this problem. This hands-on approach was good. The group presentations made very clear the advantage of using the A3 to lay out how to define and attack a problem successfully. Neither group completed the A3, but each thought the process so helpful that they wanted to finish & discuss the results. It was agreed to continue with this work at the next Clinical.

Adjourn

The CI-PS discussed and agreed to go off the standard Clinical agenda and focus the December 19th Clinical on post-Miller discussion, strategies, and planning in the morning and the continuation of the A3 exercise in the afternoon.

Checkout:

- Out of practice with the practice
- Group work was good
- Good to be back
- Great to see the tools used.
- Happy to be back and contribute

Lesson of the Day: As Marcel noted — There is Lean in Learn.

And we “r” both lean and learning.

BTC Lean Events

Date	Time	Topic	Location	Contact
Dec 16	8-noon 1-5 pm	Ken Miller Workshops	Elks Lodge, 397 CCD Augusta	ASD / WEL
Dec 19	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State St, 1 st Flr	ASD / WEL
Jan 16	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State St, 1 st Flr	ASD / WEL
Feb 20	8:15-4:30	Clinical Supervision	221 State St, 1 st Flr	ASD / WEL

* To add or see more events or detail, go to the Bend the Curve Calendar in Outlook's Public Folders.

Perhaps it is not surprising then that it is Gaia itself working to change our behavior. And change our behavior we must.

I suspect this transition — as most transitions — will be painful. We need to think of new ways of living and new ways of doing business.

For CI-Ps, this will come as no surprise since the nature of the thinking, behavior, and work we promote focuses directly on how we can better use resources more efficiently and more effectively.

Gaia is a comforting thought in some ways because it says that the work we do as CI-Ps is inexorably tied to larger system changes. As CI-Ps we know **Lean** is fundamentally **Green**. Is it any surprise that [international conferences](#) on **Lean** and **Green** are now appearing?

Years ago Toyota showed the world how less can be more, and when other organizations applied their methods and principles they proved it again and again. We have proven them here in Maine State Government as well.

Recently, we had the opportunity to return to Vital Records to revisit their Death Record process. The team re-mapped their current state - which 3 years ago was their future state - because they were now ready to automate the entire process.

When we calculated the lead time from the original VSM work we saw it drop from 90 days to 5 days, and when the new future

state is fully implemented, it will drop again to approximately 1 minute.

These changes are huge and will bring productivity gains in staff time, reductions in floor space, less paper, and less transportation while at the same time improving customer access to vital documents when and where they want them.

Work is an expenditure of energy, whether we are washing a car, typing a letter, making a zerox copy, or solving a problem.

We know evolution sides with those organism and organizations that can use that energy more productively than competitors. It is a natural law that we can ignore in the short run but eventually the bill comes due, as seems to be happening now.

To my mind we have little choice about the decisions before us.

Maybe Maine should take the lead from our sister state New Hampshire with its "Live Free or Die" license plate and design a license plate that says "Go Lean or Go Extinct"!

A more productive use of increasing scarce resources is becoming an imperative; the best part though is in the process of improving customer service we are creating a healthier and cleaner environment.

Think: **Lean is Green**.

— **Walter**

New Beginnings — Practicum in Lean Management: Fundamentals of Process Improvement

Using a hands-on approach to integrating its learnings, DHHS conducted an introductory lean management Practicum for DHHS managers and supervisors on November 19th. This marks the beginning of a process of on-going development in becoming a lean manager. Designed collaboratively by the DHHS Office of Lean Management (Walter Lowell, Lita Klavins) and the Staff Education & Training Unit (Bonnie Tracy), this first class was planned as the beginning of a lean management track of courses and practice.

Signing up to participate reflects a significant commitment for the ten participants, indicating their personal interest in becoming a lean manager and their commitment to analyzing and implementing a lean, problem-solving approach and culture in their own work and that of their programs and staff.

The participants will be supported throughout these learning and improvement processes by the *Bend the Curve* (BTC) Continuous Improvement Practitioners (CI-Ps) designated to work with them and their teams. The staff of the DHHS Office of Lean Management will also be available.

Scope and Timelines of Practicum Work:

- 1) Problem/Issue Identification for Improvement (November 12, 2008);
- 2) Reading of Ken Miller *Widget* book (November 18, 2008);
- 3) Full participation in Practicum in Lean Management; class (November 19, 2008);
- 4) Participation in at least one lean study mission (February 28, 2009);
- 5) Development and implementation of improvement project addressing the problem/issue identified (as indicated in IP);
- 6) Formal presentation of project and results to Commissioner (June-July, 2009); and
- 7) Continuing personal practice and development of lean, problem-solving management (On-going).

"The lean management system consists of the discipline, daily practices, and tools you need to establish and maintain a persistent, intensive focus on process. It is the *process flow* that sustains and extends lean implementations."

Mann, David. Creating a Lean Culture: Tools to Sustain Lean Conversions. New York, NY: Productivity Press. 2005.

Premise of book: "...Culture is critical, and to change it, you have to change your management system."

DHHS Study Mission — Some Comments

Brewer Automotive Components

P. Smith

Thanks so much for arranging this study mission – I was totally impressed and I learned a lot.

I had two major impressions to share with you:

1.) Lean is often seen as being a method for improving manufacturing workflow. At BAC we saw this application of the Lean tools in action in the classic sense. However, the Lean culture there was palpable, and Lean tools were used not only for the manufacturing process, but for every part of the business. Even the process for ordering and maintaining office supplies had been subject to Lean intervention there. So, the takeaway lesson for me is that Lean will work best if it is taken as a whole and is part of a culture change. We really must adopt the core philosophies of Lean (visualize work, standardize, reduce waste, continuous improvement, etc.) and not see it as only a set of tools to increase productivity. I know that these are concepts that you embrace and have communicated well – but seeing this in action is powerful.

2.) A related point is that for this Lean culture to endure, it must be seen as important at ALL levels of the organization. It was obvious that the parent companies of BAC (and of course their customer, Toyota) support Lean business process. What was so intriguing to me was that all employees in the plant also apparently embraced Lean concepts. I think this is absolutely critical. I was very impressed that a company that spends so much effort trying to recover 1 or 2 seconds in the cycle time of a manufacturing step also supports a minimum of 24 hours (!) of lean education for each employee. This was eye-opening for me.

So, what do you think about a Lean 101 course for Maine State Government (maybe 4-8 hours with similar content to the course the Lab senior management did with you) that could be offered to staff? I think if one existed, I would want every person in my division to take it. How else can we find champions for this work and let it grow from the work-level up?

T. Crosby

Maintaining a continuous improvement environment is the biggest challenge we face. Andy [Fitzpatrick, *the Plant Manager*] is able to do it with a mandatory suggestion and reward system. While we can't really use 'rewards' within state government, recognition might be a useful and motivating factor.

Also, the use of daily stand-ups, (currently employed in the Inorganics section) is essential both to communication and continuous improvement.



Department of Health
and Human Services

Maine People Living
Safe, Healthy and Productive Lives

John E. Baldacci, Governor

Brenda M. Harvey, Commissioner

Office of Lean Management, DHHS

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The primary purpose of the *Bend the Curve* Team is to provide support, consultation, assistance, and leadership in process and other improvement approaches and activities for State staff and work teams as they seek to continually improve their work culture, procedures, processes, and environments – in order to meet the mission of the department and the expectations of Maine citizens.

We're on the net!

<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/btc>

<http://www.maine.gov/labor/bendthecurve/>

Bend
the Curve

Continuous Improvement Practitioners: BTC Intervention Facilitation Status

DOP 1-5 to be re-scheduled / Miller session plan for 12/16

The five-day CI-P Bronze first level training (DOP 1-5) has been cancelled because the critical number of participants was not reached. It will be re-scheduled in 2009, with planning & design for smaller groups.

Planning continues for a 12/16/08 Ken Miller set of workshops.

Check the Public Folder BTC calendar & come to the planning meetings.

DHHS		DOL		DAFS	
Kate D. Carnes	L	Jorge A. Acero	O	Rae-Ann Brann	L
Nancy Cronin	O	Michael T. Brooker	IA-O	Wendy Christian	IA-O
Nancy Desisto	L	Deidre A. Coleman	IA-O	Rebecca S. Greene	IA-L
Jane French	L	Joan A. Cook	CL	Lyndon R. Hamm	IA-CL
James Fussell	L	Stephen C. Crate	IA-O	Alicia Kellogg	C-O
Marcel Gagne	O	Arthur S. Davis	L	Billy J. Ladd	CL
Julita Klavins	L	Merle A. Davis	L	Michaela T. Loisel	IA-L
Don Lemieux	C-O	Eric Dibner	O		
Muriel Littlefield	C-L	Peter D. Diplock	O	DOT	
Walter E. Lowell	L	Brenda G. Drummond	IA-O	Michael Burns	C-O
Jack Nicholas*	IA-O	Anita C. Dunham	IA-CL	Jessica Glidden	O
Ann O'Brien	L	Karen D. Fraser	L	Rick Jeselskis	IA-O
Cheryl Ring	C-CL	Timothy J. Griffin	L	Robert McFerren	IA-O
Terry Sandusky	L	Gaetane S. Johnson	IA-O	Sam McKeeman	C-O
Clough Toppan*	CL	James J. McManus	IA-CL	Jeffrey Naum	IA-O
Helen Wieczorek*	IA-O	Scott R. Neumeyer	IA-O		
		Bruce H. Prindall	IA-L	DEP	
OPEGA, Legislature		John L. Rioux	L	Carmel A. Rubin	IA-O
Matthew K. Kruk	IA-O	Sheryl J. Smith	L		

* Community CI-P

IA - Inactive

C - "Champion for Lean" -not facilitating

L - Lead

CL - Learning Co-Lead

O - Learning Observer